

FILE *Security 5-1*
The Federal Diary

'Keyhole Peeping' Charges Denied

By
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The Chairman of the Civil Service Commission says despite what some Senators and newspapers may say, the government as a boss does not have any new "puritanical" standards of morality, and that keyhole peepers and informants have not been unleashed on employees who protest policies of their agencies.

Robert E. Hampton, who served under the past three Presidents, said Uncle Sam's personnel rules contain sufficient administrative due process, and are really common-sense expressions of fair play.

He said recent newspaper stories about federal blacklists, and keystone cop-style investigators in government are unfair and tend to make federal workers—and congressional committees—nervous over nothing.

Hampton obviously had in mind rockets fired by Sen. **Sam J. Ervin Jr.** (D-N.C.), who heads the Senate Constitutional Rights Subcommittee, and recent newspaper publicity given agency fitness checks for employees.

One story about CSC's own office of investigations listed "suspect" publications of both the right and left wings, which reportedly are combed for names and tidbits about the political leanings of individuals who may work for the government, or who might someday apply. The story quoted an employee who handed the documents, but admitted he did not know exactly which were dangerously right wing and which were dangerously left wing.

In a talk with a group of federal lawyers, Hampton said he also wanted to counter recent newspaper reports that loyalty oath standards for federal workers have been dropped.

Hampton said, "The idea that federal employees may not be required to be loyal to the government they serve because of the high public interest about this element, he told

the attorneys, "Managers have a special need to obtain the best legal advice available whenever a personnel action in any way is affected by the issue of loyalty."

What he told them concerning both the blacklist and the loyalty issues in effect, is that neither have been changed, although recent court decisions on individual rights have caused CSC and all other government agencies to be more careful in actions related to employee conduct.

He asked that the attorneys bone up on federal personnel matters, so they can assist agencies—and employees—in such cases. But he said he also was "deeply concerned" about the "other side of the coin" in loyalty and protest cases.

"Administrators are generally quite alert to the strictures and constraints placed on their actions by law and regulation," said the government's chief personnel adviser. "They try to live by the rules but feel that at times some lawyers who serve them fail to recognize that there is a need for balance."

"Within the executive branch we deal with a tremendous work force and a complex variety of problems. This means that the overall management of that work force is, in itself, a major governmental mission. The lawyer who undertakes to advise a manager or administrator should make a proper effort to help him and should not over interpret the law and regulations so as to penalize the legitimate and effective accomplishment of the management mission."

Hampton's statement will reassure some employees, and probably worry others.

Daniel J. Kearney, a New England regional vice president, says he is in the race to replace **John F. Griner** as president of the **American Federation of Government Employees**. The federation is far and away the largest federal union, and its influence in Congress is a major factor in government pay and fringe benefit fights.

Kearney charges the present national leadership has concentrated too much power in Washington. He says he would give local and regional unions more say. Griner at the union's August convention in Denver.